

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PHNOM 05192 211220Z

53

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 SY-05 AID-05 ACDA-05 SSO-00

NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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O P 211140Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9901

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY SAIGON PRIORITY

USMISSION USUN NY PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L PHNOM PENH 5192

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, CB

SUBJ: MARCH 21, THE 80TH DAY OF THE OFFENSIVE

REF: PHNOM PENH 5138

1. SUMMARY. KC ROCKET ATTACKS AGAINST POCHENTONG INCREASED SOMEWHAT IN INTENSITY, WITH ONE ROUND LANDING NEAR THE AIRLIFT UNLOADING RAMP. THE AIRLIFT HALTED BRIEFLY, THEN RESUMED. THE KC STEPPED UP THEIR PRESSURE AGAIN IN THE NEAK LUONG-BANAM AREA, DESTROYING A LARGE NUMBER OF HOUSES, BUT FANK FORCES RESPONDED WELL. FANK ABANDONED A POSITION IN BATTAMBANG PROVINCE, FOLLOWING STEADY PRESSURE FOR THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS. THE KC AGAIN INFILTRATED FRIENDLY POSITIONS ON THE EAST BANK OF THE MEKONG OPPOSITE PHNOM PENH AND UNDERSTRENGTH FANK FORCES THERE ARE TRYING TO PUSH THEM BACK. END SUMMARY

2. KC ATTACKS BY FIRE AGAINST POCHENTONG INCREASED IN INTENSITY AS SOME FIFTEEN 107MM ROCKETS ON OR NEAR THE AIRFIELD WERE REPORTED BY MID-AFTERNOON MARCH 21.
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PAGE 02 PHNOM 05192 211220Z

ONE ROUND LANDED NEAR THE RAMP WHERE THE DC-8S AND

C-130S UNLOAD. FOUR KHMER WERE KILLED AND 18 WOUNDED, SEVERAL SERIOUSLY. THERE WAS NO DAMAGE TO AIRCRAFT. THE Airlift WAS SUSPENDED TEMPORARILY BUT RESUMED AFTER APPROXIMATELY ONE HOUR. THERE WERE ONLY FIVE ROCKETS REPORTED IN THE CITY, KILLING ONE PERSON AND WOUNDING FIFTEEN.

3. AFTER SEVERAL DAYS OF DIMINISHED PRESSURE (REFTEL), THE KC STEPPED UP THEIR ACTIVITIES IN THE BANAM-NEAK LUONG AREA, BUT FANK RESPONDED QUITE WELL. THE KC REPORTEDLY DESTROYED SOME 80 HOUSES ALONG ROUTE 15 BETWEEN NEAK LUONG AND BANAM ANF FIFTY MORE IN AN ATTACK BY FIRE WITHIN NEAK LUONG. TWO WERE REPORTED KILLED AND FIFTEEN WOUNDED IN THIS LATTER ATTACK. HOWEVER, FANK FORCES REPULSED A GROUND ATTACK EAST OF NEAK LUONG KILLING 50 KC AND SEIZING AN IMPRESSIVE ASSORTMENT OF WEAPONS.

4. A FRIENDLY POSITION NORTHWEST OF BATTAMBANG CITY WAS ABANDONED MARCH 20. THIS FOLLOWS A PERIOD OF SEVERAL WEEKS OF STEADY KC HARASSMENT OF VARIOUS FANK POSITIONS THROUGHOUT THE PROVINCE. THE EROSION IN BATTAMBANG IS GRADUAL BUT STEADY.

5. KC TROOPS ON THE EAST BANK OF THE MEKONG OPPOSITE PHNOM PENH HAVE AGAIN INFILTRATED FRIENDLY POSITIONS (REFTEL). GOVERNMENT FORCES ARE TRYING TO PUSH THEM BACK, BUT ARE BECOMING WORN DOWN BY THE DAILY FIGHTING IN THE AREA AND LACK OF REPLACEMENTS.
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